

Prime Minister of Serbia, Ana Brnabic stated today that the decision on the Jadar mine will be made only when the Environmental Impact Study is ready and that Serbia will not allow our lithium to be exported.

Answering the questions of the journalists after the award ceremony for the students in PKS, she pointed out that, although Rio Tinto has been present in Serbia since 2004, the previous authorities did not ask what would happen to lithium from Serbia.

- Only we, as the Government of Serbia, asked Rio Tinto for the first time that if the project is done and lithium is mined, the entire chain will be in Serbia and that Rio Tinto will work together with the Government of Serbia to bring in investors - Brnabic emphasized.

She pointed out that only an agreement on cooperation was signed with Rio Tinto, but that it does not guarantee anything except that, if there is mining, the chain remains in Serbia and that lithium is not exported.

Responding to the remarks about non-transparency regarding that project, she said that she did not know what kind of non-transparency was being talked about, because, as she stated, everything was open and public.

- When they finished the previous feasibility study, I was in Loznica and Rio Tinto, answering questions from journalists, but they were not related to Jadar. No, because the story has not been politicized yet, because the project was great for everyone and they could hardly wait for it - said Brnabic.

She added that, while Rio Tinto invested in socially responsible behavior, everyone was proud of them, and today they say they do not trust them.

- They have been here since 2004, so for 17 years. They worked and lived with them so much, land was sold to them, and now they say they do not trust Rio Tinto - the Prime Minister stated.

She underlined that Rio Tinto did not receive a permit or a solution for exploitation from Serbia, and that the decision will be made only when an environmental impact study is done.

- If it shows that there is no negative impact on the environment, then we will see whether to bring in investors or not, because we will not allow lithium to be exported from Serbia. If those who were in power until 2012 were in power now, they would export lithium as a "white tulip" because it never occurred to them to ask Rio Tinto what would happen to our lithium - concluded Brnabic, Novosti reports.